

REMARKS

The Office Action dated June 8, 2004, has been received and reviewed.

Claims 1 through 22 are currently pending and under consideration in the above-referenced application, each standing rejected.

New claims 23-26 have been added.

Reconsideration of the above-referenced application is respectfully requested.

Claim Amendments

Each of claims 1-22 has been amended to remove unnecessary occurrences of the term “said,” while replacing the other occurrences of the term “said” with the equivalent term “the.” Claims 19 and 22 have also been amended to replace the term “including” with the equivalent term “comprising.” None of these revisions narrows the scope of any of claims 1-22.

Independent claims 1 and 14 have been revised to broaden the scopes thereof. Various revisions have been made to other claims for the sake of consistency (*e.g.*, to avoid antecedent basis issues).

As none of these amendments has been made to place the claims in condition for allowance, each of claims 1-22 should be interpreted in accordance with the full scope of the doctrine of equivalents.

Preliminary Amendment

Please note that a Preliminary Amendment was filed in the above-referenced application on September 15, 2003, but that the undersigned attorney has not yet received any acknowledgement that the Preliminary Amendment has been entered into the Office file for the above-referenced application. If, for some reason, the Preliminary Amendment has not yet been entered into the Office file, the undersigned attorney would be happy to provide the Office with a true copy thereof.

Obviousness-Type Double Patenting Rejections

Claims 1-4 and 13 stand rejected under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 1 and 9 of U.S. Patent 6,585,927 (hereinafter “the ‘927 Patent”).

Claims 14-16 are rejected under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 1-18 of the ‘927 Patent.

A terminal disclaimer and the appropriate fee are being filed herewith, in compliance with 37 C.F.R. § 1.321(b) and (c), to obviate the obviousness-type double patenting rejection, thereby expediting prosecution of the above-referenced application and avoiding further expense and time delay. The filing of a terminal disclaimer in the above-referenced application should not be construed as acquiescence of the propriety of the obviousness-type double patenting rejection.

35 U.S.C. § 101 Double Patenting Rejections

Claims 5-12 and 17-22 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 101 for reciting the same invention as that to which claims 1-8 and 18-23 of the ‘927 Patent are directed.

It is respectfully submitted that each of claims 5-12 is allowable, among other reasons, for depending from claims 1 and 4, which are allowable, while claims 18-22 are each allowable, among other reasons, for depending from claims 14 and 17, which are allowable.

Accordingly, withdrawal of the 35 U.S.C. § 101 double patenting rejections of claims 5-12 and 17-22 is respectfully requested.

New Claims

New claims 23-26 have been added.

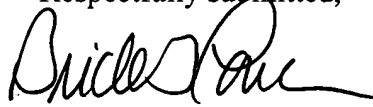
New claims 23 and 24, which depend from claims 1 and 23, respectively, recite subject matter which has been removed from independent claim 1. New claims 25 and 26 also depend from independent claim 1.

It is respectfully submitted that none of these new claims introduces new matter into the above-referenced application.

CONCLUSION

It is respectfully submitted that each of claims 1-26 is allowable. An early notice of the allowability of each of these claims is respectfully solicited, as is an indication that the above-referenced application has been passed for issuance. If any issues preventing allowance of the above-referenced application remain which might be resolved by way of a telephone conference, the Office is kindly invited to contact the undersigned attorney.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Brick G. Power", written over a horizontal line.

Brick G. Power
Registration No. 38,581
Attorney for Applicants
TRASKBRITT, PC
P.O. Box 2550
Salt Lake City, Utah 84110-2550
Telephone: 801-532-1922

Date: September 8, 2004

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